Chapter 8
Conclusions and Suggestions

8.0 Introduction

The present study was undertaken with the objective to analyse the present healthcare services marketing of various hospitals in the city of Pune and its implication on Customer Relationship Management. The present status of the healthcare industry with reference to the city of Pune was studied on various parameters and quality. Various types of facilities and amenities provided by the hospitals to the patients were studied and tabulated. The customers or patients response to the existing healthcare services has been studied and recorded and the need gap identified in terms of expectation and availability of services. The reasons for shortcomings in enhancing the quality of services have been identified so as to help the industry take appropriate measures and have a very strong customer relationship management.

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8.1 The Key Observations of the Study

1. Maximum respondents being patients help to get a broader picture of the hospital services and true feeling of their comfort, treatment and extent of satisfaction.

2. Majority of the respondents were dissatisfied with the hospital services which have led to poor customer relationship management. Hence by improving Hospital services and strong marketing will lead to strong customer relationship management.

3. It is believed that there is a need to enhance the quality of healthcare services presently offered by the hospitals in the city of Pune. More emphasis on patient care not only by the doctors but also by the Nurses, Receptionist, Customer Care Executives, Billing Executives, Housekeeping Staff, Food & Beverage personnel, Security and so on.

4. It has been proved that the expectations of the customers regarding healthcare services are not fulfilled on the parameters of quality, cost of time utility and patient – hospital relationship.
5. It is also accepted that the level of satisfaction derived from healthcare services by the users is low and can be enhanced by improving relationship with the patient (users/customers) by the hospital. Therefore it is suggested to have a telephonic round of feedback sooner the patient leaves the hospital or may be within two days for him or her to give honest feedback of the hospital services. This will form a strong marketing tool and create a very strong Customer Relationship Management of the patient with the Hospital.
8.2 Satisfaction of Objectives

- There is a need to enhance the quality of healthcare services presently offered by the hospitals in the city of Pune.

- The expectations of the customers regarding healthcare services are not fulfilled on the parameters of quality, cost of time utility and patient – hospital relationship.

- It is also accepted that the level of satisfaction derived from healthcare services by the users is low and can be enhanced by improving relationship with the patient (users/customers) by the hospital.

8.3 Testing of Hypotheses

Based on the findings presented in Chapter 6:

1. The hypothesis stating “it is believed that there is a need to enhance the quality of Healthcare Services presently offered by the hospitals in the City of Pune” is accepted based on the findings from the Chapter 6 Analysis and Interpretation points 22 to 24
2. The hypothesis stating “it also presumed that the expectations of the customers regarding healthcare services are not fulfilled on the parameters of quality, cost of time utility and patient – hospital relationship” is accepted based on the findings from Chapter 6 Analysis and Interpretation points 27 to 38

3. The hypothesis stating “It is also accepted that the level of satisfaction derived from healthcare services by the users is low and can be enhanced by improving relationship with the patient(users/ customers) by the hospital” is accepted based on the findings from Chapter 6 Analysis and Interpretation points 39 to 45 and healthcare services can be enhanced by considering findings from points 13 to point 17

8.4 Suggestions for Enhancing Healthcare Services and thereby Increasing Customer Relationship Management.

1. Outside Pune only surgery related hospital services should be promoted outside Pune city. Because for OPD they prefer getting treated by a local Doctor rather than
travelling a long distance and spending a huge amount on commuting from place of residence to a Hospital in Pune.

2. Maximum respondents being patients help to get a broader picture of the hospital services and true feeling of their comfort, treatment and extent of satisfaction.

3. It is suggested that marketing of healthcare services should be majorly focused on the earning members of the family either heading business or working/ earning member of the family.

4. Those who have experienced the hospital services of a particular hospital must not have been satisfied with the hospital services, hence try out for newer places where they can finally lay their hands on for the treatment. Hence services provided by the hospital should be taken care of right from entry point to exit.
5. Overall, strong TPA awareness needs to be created amongst the general public this will also enhance the respective hospital’s brand image.

6. Even if the hospital is new and all the above parameters are met sequentially people would not prefer already established hospitals. There is massive scope for newer entrants in this segment. Proper and thorough marketing of hospital services should be aimed at for strong Customer Relationship Management.

7. Hospital services in the form of action makes a world of difference for the respondents. All hospitals should ensure proper training is given to the hospital staff to live up to the expectations of the public who are their customers and should be their customers forever. This will also enhance good will of the hospital when these satisfied end users market the good hospital services by word of mouth to their relatives, family friends, co workers and even at their own house.
8. When a patient is getting into a hospital for treatment he or she is physically as well as mentally very stressed out. Hence Hospital should employ maximum people at the entry point to ensure that the admission process time is to the bare minimum which will comfort the patient and their relatives since treatment can start quickly putting the patient and their relatives or friend at ease. It is also advisable to keep the front office staff away from stress so that they can be pleasant in greeting and attending to the stressed out patients round the clock. It is the front office who actually has to face a lot of pressure from the patients or the patient's relatives or friends. Stress Buster classes should be conducted for the hospital staff at least weekly so that they are never under stress at their workplace. This will further enhance image of the hospital because employees are any organization’s First Brand Ambassador’s to talk positive about the organization provided they themselves are contented.
9. Look does not matter in case a Doctor is treating a patient. The most important is Treatment should be successful which is of prime importance. It is this success rate of the doctors which can be marketed to increase footfall in the hospital. Hence treating doctor who has a good treatment record in other words success rate should be talked about and the same should be informed to all the staff of the hospital who should talk one language. This helps spreading Good will of the hospital at a faster pace.

10. Doctors associated with the hospital should try and put in their best in giving best treatment to the patient, comforting the patients so that the patient would want to repeat the treatment in the same hospital if need arises in future be it for self or family members or be it advising family friends or neighbours. This helps creating a very strong Customer relationship management.

11. Not only patients but also patient’s relatives or friends or any patient’s attendant should be given due
recognition and respect when in the hospital so that they in turn become respective hospital's Brand Ambassador and indirectly help in patient flow to the hospital.

12. Hospitals should pay attention to the GPs/ Private Practitioners in general; referral doctors in order to ensure enhance flow of patients to the hospital. This could be by way of visit being paid by the hospital representative to those Doctors, parting Hospital info such as success rate of operations or some atypical case been successfully treated by the Hospital Doctor/ Surgeon. Any new medical equipment installed in the hospital or any accreditation received or in the process that talks of hospital's quality service being provided to the beneficiaries. Association of list of TPAs with the hospital and many more activities including testimonies of the patients can be shared with the referral or Family Doctors. In addition any renowned coming on board should also be informed to the GPs/ referral Doctors. Very few respondents had availed the hospital services
after seeing the hospital Hoarding. None had seen website nor heard of any advertisement on radio. Few respondents had seen some special OPD advertisement in the newspaper that had lured them to use the hospital services. Hence Service to the patient should be the best so as to ensure that they leave the hospital premise satisfied and delighted so that they spread good name of the hospital among their family members, neighbours, relatives and friends and that the hospital gets referrals from them.

13. The Medical Council of India mentions that Patients medical diagnosis is a confidential data and the same should not be talked about in public other than the patient and may be very close relation of the patient. This kind of awareness needs to be inculcated among the nurse especially and the RMOs as well as the medical record department.

14. Privacy is not all adhered to either by way of patient health record, use of wash room by hospital staff as well
as patient, with respect to giving bed pan be it semi private room or General ward. Students (interns) were asked to follow the consultants at the time of discussing even private questions related to health or feeling after surgery or medication.

15. Majority of patients had concerned that informed consent to medical treatment is not taken nor discussed, which should be ideally discussed if not with patient but with the relative.

16. Satisfied customers results in excellent customer relationship management. It is the same customers who can give repeat business to the hospital. It is easier and economical to retain the existing customers than hunting for new patients which is not only difficult but also expensive to get them to the hospital due to high promotion cost.

17. Proper awareness should be created among the patients or relatives as to for which different problems in
case they encounter, whom should they approach to. This will help the patients or their relative not to run from pillar to post. At the same time the hospital staff attending to the problem should be trained well enough to handle and resolve the problem so that the patient or the patient's relative feels comfortable and gets the assurance the patient is in safe hands.

18. The hospital staff should inform the patients or the patient's relative regarding the presence of the customer service department and its role so that the same service can be availed by them in case of any need related to them. This will also keep the patient at ease.

19. Customer care representative were definitely not courteous hence the respondents refused to respond to this or give their honest feedback with the fear that the hospital would give a bad treatment for giving their honest feedback as they were not happy with particular staff or service or the hospital services overall. Proper training needs to be imparted to the customer care
service representative to ensure all service related issues experienced by the patient or the attendant is taken care of.

20. Hospital should try and inculcate the habit of listening to the patient or the patient's relative carefully so that they feel comfortable but at the same time the problem heard should be addressed at the earliest or else just listening to problem carefully without any action is a futile exercise and will add to the dissatisfaction of the patient or the relative.

21. Thorough training on business etiquettes by the hospital for the customer service representative.

22. Overall all those hospitals which have customer service departments need to provide training to their customer care representatives to enhance the brand image and service quality of the hospital.

23. To ensure that the patient or the relative is satisfied with the hospital services hospital should give ample
training to the customer service representatives so that they are equipped with majority of the answers to the questioned raised by the respondents. In fact Frequently asked questions (FAQs) should be prepared by the customer service department collated answers to the same should be provided in a printed format and also distributed among the staff. May be in future they are faced with the same question and the same FAQs can serve as a ready reckoner. Weekly meetings should be held to ensure customer service department is doing a good job. This can be learnt from the feedback forms that should be designed for the patient or their relatives to give the feedback on hospital services. This should be reviewed immediately and the problem areas to be plugged so that the same problem is not repeated. At the same time patients who have appreciated employees for rendering good services should be applauded in staff meeting to motivate the employees which in turn has a good spillover effect in their day to day work.
performance. Thereby enhancing hospital services in the eyes of the general public.

24. Overall, which means the number of representatives are less, training not provided, means of calling the representative needs improvement or improved means of direct contact in room and customer care department needs to exist. This will enhance the quality of hospital services thereby will increase the hospital brand image.

25. Smile cost nothing. Hence this habit should be inculcated among the staff members which further adds in creating a congenial ambience.

26. Hospital staff should be made sensitive towards the habit of caring among the patients so as to make them feel at home and they in turn are our brand ambassadors who will by word of mouth spread good services, treatment that they have experienced and will promote among their family friends, neighbours and relatives.
27. Training plays a major role in getting the habit of prompt on call service to patients inculcated among the staff members.

28. The hospital staff should be made sensitive towards the patient or attendant's problems or concerns by lending their ears to their problems and trying their level best to resolve them.

29. Overall this proves that sufficient training needs to be given to the hospital staff based on the frequently asked questions by the patients or their relative or patient's friend. FAQs could be general hospital services available, Doctors on Panel, visiting Doctors under different specialty, hospital infrastructure or activities or events in the hospitals. Some simple medical terms training needs to be given so as to empathize or even understand the patient better and respond in a much better way. At times there are inter personal relationship problem existing among different department people which has a spillover effect on the hospital service towards the
patient. Should be nullified as soon as possible so as to avoid the hospital image being hampered.

30. Overall proves that Hospital Staff recruited need not be good looking but certainly should be sensitive towards the patient’s problems or concerns.

31. Respondents felt that the dress code of the hospital staff was either not clean or not pressed properly. Most of them did not have badges that helps identify department and designation. Most of the hospital staff hair was in a shabby state. Uniform Hair look gives a good feel factor. Hence it is advised to maintain dress code or try and closely follow AIRLINES STAFF. Besides hospitals can also standardize jewellery (May be a simple pearl set with standard colour matching the dress colour). Depending on the area where the hospital is located and the category of patients visiting the hospital western or Indian or Indo western dress code can be designed.
32. Important point or rather an eye opener for the hospital management and Nursing Colleges to ensure that the to be nurses undergoing training in the Nursing Colleges or Nurses selected in particular hospitals should be asked to at least know English/ Hindi/Marathi. Marathi mentioned because study is reference to Pune. Pune is located in Maharashtra and the regional language is Marathi.

33. Adequate info on Past, Present & Future course of Treatment should be given to the patient or the relative. This eases them out of the mental stress which further helps in quick recovery of the patient.

34. while marketing Hospital services one should highlight the success rates of respective specialty doctors. This will increase footfalls to the hospitals. Can be put up on the website, in pamphlets, can be highlighted during CMEs, Camps for general public or brochures or during patient education programmes.
35. Doctors should give a level of comfort not only to the patients but also to the patient's relative or friend whoever is patient's attendant at that point of time. This eases out the stress, makes them feel comfortable, patient responds to treatment faster. These things plays a vital positive psychological effect on the patient's mind. Hence while marketing Hospital services one should highlight the Compassionate healthcare provided. This will increase footfalls to the hospitals. Can be put up on the website, in pamphlets, can be highlighted during CMEs, Camps for general public or brochures or during patient education programmes.

36. Doctors should show a level of caring not only to the patients but also to the patient's relative or friend, whoever is the patient's attendant at that point of time. This eases out the stress, makes them feel comfortable, patient responds to treatment faster. These things play a vital positive psychological effect on the patient's mind. Hence while marketing Hospital services one should
highlight the Compassionate healthcare provided. This will increase footfalls to the hospitals. Can be put up on the website, in pamphlets, can be highlighted during CMEs, Camps for general public or brochures or during patient education programmes.

37. Doctors should bear a smile on the face. This eases out the stress, makes them feel comfortable, patient responds to treatment faster. These things play a vital positive psychological effect on the patient's mind. Hence while marketing Hospital services one should highlight the Compassionate healthcare provided. This will increase footfalls to the hospitals. Can be put up on the website, in pamphlets, can be highlighted during CMEs, Camps for general public or brochures or during patient education programmes.

38. Treating Doctor should visit the patient regularly. This eases out the stress, makes them feel comfortable, patient responds to treatment faster. These things play a vital positive psychological effect on the patient's mind.
Hence while marketing Hospital services one should highlight the Compassionate healthcare provided. This will increase footfalls to the hospitals. Can be put up on the website, in pamphlets, can be highlighted during CMEs, Camps for general public or brochures or during patient education programmes.

39. Treating Doctor should give a patient hearing. This eases out the stress, makes them feel comfortable, patient responds to treatment faster. These things plays a vital positive psychological effect on the patient's mind. Hence while marketing Hospital services one should highlight the Compassionate healthcare provided. This will increase footfalls to the hospitals. Can be put up on the website, in pamphlets, can be highlighted during CMEs, Camps for general public or brochures or during patient education programmes.

40. Treating Doctor should discuss patients health status and that too in a positive way. This eases out the stress, makes them feel comfortable, patient responds to
treatment faster. These things play a vital positive psychological effect on the patient's mind. Hence while marketing Hospital services one should highlight the Compassionate healthcare provided. This will increase footfalls to the hospitals. Can be put up on the website, in pamphlets, can be highlighted during CMEs, Camps for general public or brochures or during patient education programmes.

41. Treating Doctor is not expected to be available 24*7 but certainly RMO or resident doctor is expected and should make him or herself available as per the patient's medical help requirement.

42. Treating Doctor is not expected to be Good looking but certainly is expected to be presentable.

43. Treating Doctor is expected to be in their formal dress code, not necessarily in Blazer, but at least should wear a formal Doctor's Apron. Should have proper formal shoes rather than chappals as some of them do.
44. A very important point or rather an eyeopener for the hospital management and Medical Colleges to ensure that the to be doctors undergoing training in the medical Colleges or Doctors selected in particular hospital should be asked to atleast know English/ Hindi/Marathi. Marathi mentioned because study is reference to Pune. Pune being located in Maharashtra, regional language is Marathi.

45. Overall excellent hospital services will help in strong marketing of the hospital services and will create a good customer relationship management. The data shows a very different picture. Majority of the patients are just not happy with the quality of hospital services provided. Resulting in Poor Customer Relationship Management.

46. Hospitals need to have a good set of doctors so as to attract increase number of patients in the hospital.
47. The best mode appreciated by the respondents is to notify the patient when it is time for a check-up is by a phone call.

8.5 Limitations of the Study:

Visiting the hospitals and meeting the patients was a herculean task. Respondents were a mix of patients and their attendants. Most of the administrators, Doctors and Nurses threw their tantrums when requested for collecting the data.

Some hospitals had to visit at least 5 times to collect the information and get the questionnaire filled. None of the hospitals were ready to share the patients feedback forms which are generally taken after patients are discharge as those data are confidential and Medical Council of India and other accreditation bodies like the NABH (National Accreditation Board for Hospitals) and JCI (Joint Commission International) do not permit this practice of
showing the patients info or feedback present in document form to the outsiders.

Some patients felt that if truth about the hospitals were revealed the patients’ treatment would get affected. Hence to some questions which would have been an eye opener were kept in wraps.

8.6 Guidelines for Future Study

Considering the nature of Study the researcher is of the opinion that the following type of research can be undertaken to continue research in the above field of learning:

1. Implication of Online Healthcare Marketing on CRM

2. Impact of Healthcare Social Media on CRM

3. Impact of Free Children health check camps impact on using Hospital services

4. Association of schools with Hospitals for various events and its implication on CRM